



Improving Global Energy Security and Accessibility

ECOSOC - Balázs Czukor-Tóth



Committee: Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Issue: Improving global energy security and accessibility

Name: Balázs Czukor-Tóth

Position: Chair

Introduction:

In many nations around the world the accessibility of energy has greatly affected the quality of life. This problem does not impact all countries equally, nations in sub-Saharan Africa account for 80% of the lack of energy. In the world, this has led to a lack of development and huge stoppage in progress. This problem is one of the most urgent of our time, especially with the rapid modernization of the economy of the world. Energy and electricity are one of the key resources needed for a nation to progress and develop fruitfully. Without energy, nations cannot become sustainable or become global superpowers.

Definition of Key Terms:

Energy accessibility - energy accessibility is the definition of how easy or cheap it is to access energy it is very much based on your environment and infrastructure and the current economy.

Infrastructure - in this case this talks about the energy infrastructure so for example power plants energy grids or energy transportation anything to do with how electricity is produced or moved.

Sub-Saharan Africa - this refers to a group of nations that are below the Saharan desert some examples are Nigeria the Democratic Republic of Congo Rwanda nations such as these.

Energy security - these talks about how reliable your energy is so for example if it doesn't collapse, and your area doesn't go into a blackout that means your energy security is very good and that you're able to access energy constantly with very little problems.

Price of energy - the amount that you or your government must pay for the energy supply to your area and nation.

Background Information:

This issue of the lack of affordable energy has been a continuous problem around the world. The United Nations predicts that even in 2030 around 660 million people will still be without affordable energy, and this number does not affect all nations equally, as seen in Figure 1. African countries as well as some Southeast Asian countries are getting the worst of it. These nations that desperately need electricity are in many cases unable to receive it.

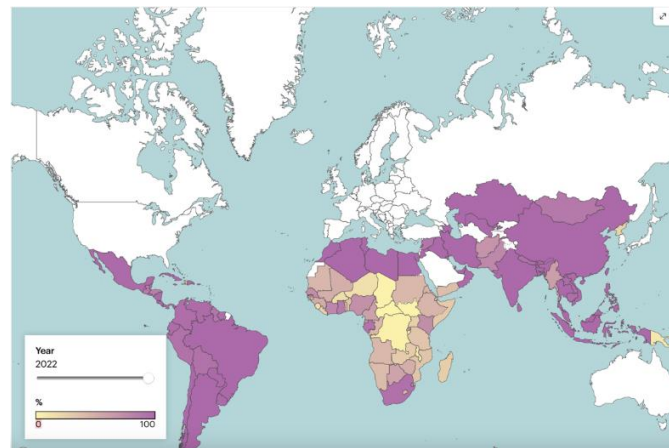


Figure 1 - Share of population with accessible energy

The main problem to getting energy to these sub-Saharan nations is not the fact that there aren't any natural resources in Africa, as seen in Figure 2 there are many natural gas and oil reserves in these countries.

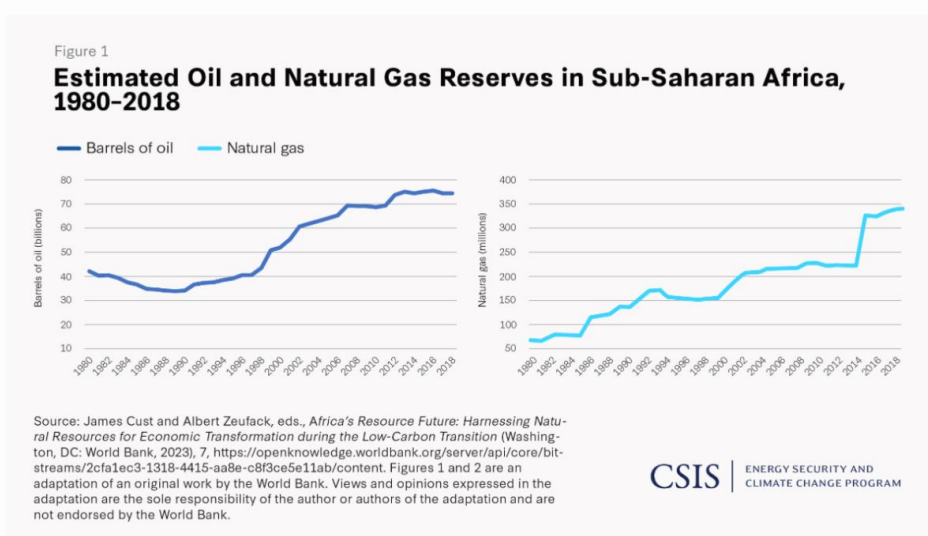


Figure 2 - Oil and gas reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa

The biggest problem is the tremendously awful infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa. The infrastructure is old and unreliable and does not meet the standards for the modern days. Between 2010 – 2022 there were 222 partial or complete grid collapses. These grid collapses can cause tremendous damage especially if they impact critical infrastructure such as hospitals and other important areas.

However, even in the first world, many nations have seen a tremendous rise in the price of these essential products, such as in the United Kingdom where a cost-of-living crisis has been happening, energy prices have risen by 70%. This is not just the case in the United Kingdom, but in all the EU countries as well. The price of electricity has hit record levels in 2022, so much so, that a lot of the population could not afford essential heating in the winter times. The weakness of the European energy supply to Russian sanctions showed, that the infrastructure was too reliant and needed to be firmly improved by making sure it was secure against completely failing if one nation was unwilling or in this case unable to sell oil to the European Union.

Stakeholders:

IEA - This organization helps nations to implement and develop better infrastructure for energy security. They also help to keep track and help to look at how energy can be made cheaper and more accessible to different nations. They have helped many sub-Saharan and African nations to develop their energy infrastructure as well as doing extremely competent research on the topic to help governments do it themselves.

Energy Companies - These companies are profiting of the high price of energy. They are the ones making and selling the product while they are sometimes very good, they can also be extremely disruptive for progress in the industry.

UN - This body has helped to motivate nations by giving them financial support and putting a sustainable development goal on the issue. While it's not the most impactful stakeholder, but still they have helped many nations with aid and support.

Sub Saharan Nations - These nations are the ones that are getting hit the hardest, while they don't have too many resources to do something about the issue. They are the nations that are suffering the most from the issue and need the most number of resources to develop their energy infrastructure. Their citizens have very little energy to work with and because of that, their nation is having a tougher time to developing into fruitful and powerful countries.

Consumers - Consumers can help shape the market and force companies to make better decisions. If the consumers are educated about how the products, they buy might not be the most beneficial for the people, they could help to change the market for the better and to make energy more accessible for everyone.

Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions and Reports:

Report by UN on how to improve energy sustainability:

<https://www.undp.org/blog/six-ways-achieve-sustainable-energy-all>

UN report on the progress of UNSDG 7:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

Previous attempts to solve the issue:

The United Nations has created a program to help nations that lack energy to improve their infrastructure. They send both personnel and financial aid to improve infrastructure and have set a goal to provide clean accessible and safe energy to 500 million people by 2025.

During the first hit of Russian sanctions leading to huge price surges, and possible lack of energy availability in the EU. Nations responded quickly and with unity. The leaders of the 27 EU members determined that the EU would move away from reliance on Russian fossil resources as soon as possible, just weeks after Russia invaded Ukraine. They decided to do this by diversifying the energy supply.

Possible Solutions:

Some possible solutions to this incredibly important problem could relate to improving the infrastructure of sharing electricity between nations. For example, nations that are near each other could be on connected grids to help those in need or putting a cap on the price of energy seeing, as energy is one of the key essentials for humanity. In this modern age it would be a great displeasure to see companies make such huge profits of these resources so price capping would be one of the best options.

Bibliography:

“6 Ways to Simultaneously Advance Energy Security and Sustainability.” *World Economic Forum*, www.weforum.org/agenda/2023/01/davos23-energy-transition-security-sustainability-whitepaper/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024

Baskaran, Gracelin, and Sophie Coste. “Achieving Universal Energy Access in Africa amid Global Decarbonization.” *CSIS*, www.csis.org/analysis/achieving-universal-energy-access-africa-amid-global-decarbonization. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

Domestic Energy Prices - The House of Commons Library, commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9491/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

“Energy - United Nations Sustainable Development.” United Nations, United Nations, www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

“Energy Access.” *UNDP*, www.undp.org/energy/our-work-areas/energy-access. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

Energy Prices and Security of Supply - Consilium.Europa.Eu, www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/energy-prices-and-security-of-supply/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

IEA “Access to Electricity – SDG7: Data and Projections – Analysis.” *IEA*, www.iea.org/reports/sdg7-data-and-projections/access-to-electricity. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.

IEA "International Energy Agency." *IEA*, www.iea.org/. Accessed 27 Apr. 2024.